

MIDDLESEX HOSPITAL.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Permit me to trouble you with a few observations on a letter respecting some abuses at the *Middlesex Hospital*, which appeared in the last No. of your journal, and which, as far as the somewhat vague and incoherent tenor of its expressions permits it to be intelligible, is the production of a medical student of *King's College*.

The writer, after briefly noticing the small number of pupils in attendance in the practice of the hospital, which he attributes to the scarcity of interesting cases, proceeds with remarkable consistency to a slightly different cause of complaint; viz. the inconvenience that he suffered from too numerous a body of spectators, who assembled to witness an important operation. And I readily admit, that at the time in question the theatre was excessively crowded, and that many gentlemen from the medical schools in the vicinity were naturally enough attracted by the interest of the occasion. But, on the other hand, I am sure that there was not one person who had any right to be there, that might not have gained admittance into the gallery, or into the area of the room, whilst among the numerous body of spectators, there was not observable the least species of indecorum or confusion; but every gentleman present appeared perfectly ready to give way at intervals, that those behind him might enjoy a better sight of the operation. And surely it is unworthy of the liberality of a correspondent of *THE LANCET*, to wish to seclude any persons from the advantages derivable from a public hospital, simply because they have not, like himself, been seduced into attendance; thus I have not gratified, by an exorbitant fee, the fraudulent extortionary of its governors or functionaries.

But whatever just cause for complaint the writer might have had in this particular, is now for the future removed; and I would merely, as a fellow-student, ask him in conclusion, whether, by an application to the medical officers, he might not have attained his purpose just as effectually, and infinitely more honourably, than by condescending to an anonymous tirade in the columns of a journal, which has invariably attacked our College and its professors with the most unreasonable and malignant hostility.

I remain, Sir, your obedient servant,
ROBERT DRUITT.

King's College, London,
Nov. 17th, 1835.

I pledge your right to advocate the interests of a friend; but surely you had none whatever to attribute, without the shadow of a reason, a gross instance of moral misconduct to another.—I am, Sir, your very obedient servant,
RICHARD CARMICHAEL.

"Rutland-square, Dec. 24, 1835."

*** The date of the foregoing letter will show that it was written long since, although it only now appears in print. We beg to assure our correspondent that the delay in its publication was wholly unintentional. The letter must have been mislaid immediately on its receipt, for on turning over some papers it has but this moment met our view. Apologizing to Mr. Druitt for the accident, we render to him, by its insertion forthwith, the only reparation which it is in our power to offer in the form of compensation for the oversight. By-the-by, does our correspondent really feel justified in speaking of that hostility as "unreasonable," which is exercised against the bad features of an institution which was expressly erected as a barrier to the progress of a free and unfettered system of medical education,—or which it may offer to the power and influence of men who have invariably exercised the bitterest and most uncompromising feelings of enmity towards the existence of an independent medical press?

MEDICAL MAGNETISM.

To the Editor.—Sir,—To you my best thanks are due for the promptness with which you gave insertion to my last letter on the mineral magnets, although it could not have reached your hand much before the eleventh hour. In the contents of that letter I am not aware that I so far forgot myself as to transgress the usual rules of courtesy observed by one gentleman towards another. If any part of my letter will bear such a construction, it was quite unintentional on my part; and if the common object which we both profess to have in view, be a simple and honest inquiry after truth, I am quite at a loss to account for Dr. Schmidt's most unwarrantable assignment of motives to me, which a moment's sober reflection would have taught him to condemn in any other person.

In the first place Dr. S. accuses me directly with bringing forward great names with the dishonourable intention of crushing him. Now as Dr. S. has so repeatedly stated, and with great truth, "that one fact is worth all the theories in the world," why does he not bring one, even one well-authenticated fact, forward, and at once overturn all the previous theories of mineral magnetism? But no; for several months some of the most respectable of our hospitals have been offered to him to try the curative powers of the magnets, and I will here hazard an opinion, from what I know of the gentlemen in the medical charge of those institutions, that not one of the doors of those places will be shut against him if he applies for admission with the above intention. What are we to infer by the non-production of such?